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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 6068

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RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 9877

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0610

RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2993

RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 7273

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SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - NORTH KOREA AND AFGHANISTAN

¶1. LEAD STORIES: Top stories on Tuesday morning included the growing H1N1 influenza epidemic in Japan.

¶2. "Change in North Korea's Approach" The liberal Mainichi editorialized (8/25): "Despite the fact that North Korea employs such tactics often, it was surprising how quickly the nation changed [its approach]. A funeral delegation from North Korea, which visited South Korea following the death of former President Kim Dae-jung, conveyed a message from North Korean leader Kim Jong Il to President Lee Myung-bak advocating the improvement of North-South relations. North Korea's current predicament must be the cause of this sudden change in policy course.... North Korea's purpose is clear.... North Korea probably intends to gain economic benefits and connect its moves to direct talks with the U.S.... Needless to say, we cannot rule out the possibility that North Korea would use foreign currency to develop nuclear arms and missiles. We need to exercise caution in negotiations [with Pyongyang]. The unified goal of the international community, which is imposing sanctions on North Korea, is the 'elimination of nuclear arms.' We hope that the ROK government will always be aware of this goal and make persistent efforts that will lead to achieving it."

¶3. "Do Not Relax Vigilance over North Korea" The business-oriented Nikkei stated in an editorial (8/25): "We must not let down our guard even though North Korea, which has criticized the Lee government [of South Korea] repeatedly, appears to have shifted its approach to dialogue.... North Korea's intention to break free of the international net of sanctions against its nuclear development by swaying the Lee government is the reason behind its sudden policy change. The global community, including South Korea, should strengthen its vigilance further... DOS Coordinator for Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1874 Goldberg is currently on a tour of four Asian nations, including Japan and South Korea. North Korea appears to be impatient about the development of an international net of sanctions. It is important for the

international community to continue to put pressure on North Korea in unity through [cooperation] among the U.S., Japan, and South Korea."

¶4. "Progress on 'Nuclear Abolition' Is Prerequisite for Assistance"
The liberal Tokyo Shimbun wrote in an editorial (8/25): "North Korea's 'change' [in its approach] appears to be the result of the UN Security Council resolution against its nuclear test.... If South Korea expands its economic assistance [to North Korea], the UNSC sanctions could become flawed... We hope the Lee government will hold dialogue with Pyongyang while maintaining the principle that 'progress on the nuclear issue is a prerequisite for assistance.'... Since the North Korean nuclear problem is directly connected to the security of Northeast Asia, the issue should be discussed at the Six-Party Talks, in which relevant nations take part. We hope that South Korea will closely coordinate with the U.S., Japan, and China before holding inter-Korean talks."

ROOS